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to a tropic and exotic one, for which he had to exhaust the resources of a naturally hot and soggy vocabulary. His book is a long series of descriptions—'tis years since I have read it and much as I distrust my memory I refuse to read it again—in which he pointed the way to the "realism" of our day, telling a tale by verbal photography, but no story, for it was always too warm for any one to do anything but feel—even to think. And the result was just exactly what our group of illustrators needed, for unlike Daumier they neither thought nor did, they described—and with such foolish charm! Under Curmer's guidance they studied the books of travel, learned the island's contours by heart from the nautical guide of the period, and spent long hours in the Jardin des Plantes of blessed memory. And they were all so proud and interested in the book—no care in descriptive drawing too great, no tender trickery too small—that somehow they managed actually to project into their work something which has kept it still alive and lovable. It made Meissonier's reputation, and whatever we may think of "Friedland" in our present-day romantic love of the primitives, Meissonier was and still remains a very considerable and often charming draughtsman.

Rarely has any book been produced with greater self-congratulation by a group of pleased and happy men. Not content with an elaborate table of the pictorial contents of the book, they stuck their portraits in; on the title page, disguised as heads on ancient coins, those of Curmer and his printer Everat; on the title of the *Chaumière Indienne* those of Meissonier (spelled with two ns!) and Paul Huet; at the head of the list of illustrations, on plaques tumbled in a pile with palettes and brushes, woodblocks, canvases, and sketch books, those of Français and Johannot; and at the end of all that of the great Orrin Smith set on a wall over a table on which are displayed the tools of his trade, pad, glass, gravers, blocks, ink slab, and ball—among them a three-cornered knife telling its own tale of technique. Even in one issue, promptly to be withdrawn and therefore rare and highly

prized, did the loving and enthusiastic Curmer insert at the end of the *Chaumière Indienne* under the words: "On n'est heureux qu'avec une bonne femme," a tail-piece bearing the portrait of his beloved wife, the "bonne femme" that she undoubtedly was. The dedication ran "Aux Artistes qui ont élevé ce Monument typographique à la Mémoire de J. H. Bernardin de Saint Pierre. Hommage d'affectueuse et profonde Reconnaissance, L. Curmer."

They played their little parts, congratulated each other, and shortly after Curmer was sold out—everything but the block of the "bonne femme," but his name has come down to us, and as long as any copies of his book survive so will it, indissolubly connected with one of the most charming masterpieces and enthusiastically naïve adventures that the history of book-making tells of. It is not Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*, it is Curmer's. Could a publisher wish for any happier form of immortality, or a collector any more charming possession?

W. M. I., JR.

INDUSTRIAL ART EDUCATION

THE effort of the Museum to make it plain to art students, designers, manufacturers, and others concerned with the production of objects having their value enhanced by good style in art, that it stands ready to help those who may desire to use its collections to further their ends, has met with interest on all sides.

The interest of the newspapers is evidenced by editorials in the *Evening Post* and the *New York Times*. We quote, with permission, from the former, entitled *An American School of the Arts and Crafts*, a suggestion which should receive careful attention from the educational authorities.

Four years of war have driven into the background this important subject of the development of a native school of arts and crafts. Not the least of the sacrifices we have been forced to make is this one of leisure for the fostering of the flowers of civilization. By the death of Frederick Crowninshield, for some years head of the American Academy at Rome and active in the development

BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

of American art education, we are reminded that the elder protagonists of our native school are passing away and that it will remain for the newer generation to take up the burden after peace has come again. Even now, those of

make itself felt once more. And mankind will need painters, sculptors, and handicraftsmen just as before the war.

Where will America be when this noble competition in the creation of the beautiful begins again? Perhaps in the



PASSAGE DU TORRENT
DESIGNED BY T. JOHANNOT AND FRANÇAIS, ENGRAVED BY S. WILLIAMS
FROM THE 1838 PAUL ET VIRGINIE

us who look forward to the reconstruction period, feel that some steps should be taken to prepare for the new era. Life is a complex affair, made up of ornamental as well as useful elements. No matter how many billions of debts will burden humanity's back when normal life resumes, the age-long desire for works of art and beautiful things will

field of fine arts our situation may be somewhat better, comparatively speaking, than that of Europe. Fortunately for us, though this is a statement that will meet with heated denial, we have travelled a rather saner road, in painting, at any rate, than some of the other nations. We have been accused of conventionality, and been rather proud

of the accusation. Whistler is not the type of our school at all, but a marvelous sport. But Inness and Wyant are our classics. And men like J. Francis Murphy, whose growth in public estimation is one of the best signs of the times, showed what a sane but sensitive soul could accomplish by simply being itself. We have, especially in landscape, relied on conservatism coupled with fairly free play of individuality. Astounding genius, sticking to the manner of the school, however, has found no difficulty in emancipating itself; as an illustration, Blakelock stands out in bold relief. Wisely enough, the chief institution abroad to which the best American talent is sent for its initial contact with foreign influences has been founded in Rome, where the atmosphere is less hectic than in Paris, the great models less close in point of time, and therefore less overwhelming. The American Academy has already shown that it can produce originality even in the shadow of Michelangelo.

The higher arts of this country need look forward to no terrible decadence after the war. In so far as battle kills the flower of youth, it will take its toll of the young painters and sculptors and architects, as it will, and indeed already has, of the young poets. But the framework of education, art schools, and older artists to train the rising generation still remains, and, above all, a hundred years and more of art traditions. On the other hand, in the humbler arts, the crafts, so-called, that touch the daily life of every man and woman and child, we are less fortunately situated. Before the war, we found ourselves on the high road to an improvement not only in American taste, but also in the ability of the American craftsmen to meet the new demand. Our museums were rapidly teaching us all what was the difference between beauty in household furnishing and ugliness. And, to meet this growing demand for the beautiful, a native craftsmanship was developing, fostered by excellent educational work. An expert on this subject maintains,

however, that, even before the war, we had a crying need for a great industrial school which would offer in its curriculum training in every major branch of the crafts. He states that, as soon as the war is over, we shall be minus 50,000 craftsmen, since Europe will not be able to send us any, and we ourselves have not developed a sufficient number, and the general standard both of workmanship and taste will suffer an alarming deterioration unless we look ahead and make provision against this contingency.

It may seem strange, even fantastic, to raise, at the present moment, an alarm of this kind. The after-war period will see many a deficit in the supply of human skill. Yet that is no reason why nothing should be done to save the public from sliding back into such abysses of wickedness as the Grant period of American household arts. Any one who thinks back to the days when the 1870 furniture cluttered up American houses will be ready to agree that all measures would be justified to forestall a relapse into such terrible times. Before August, 1914, we had not yet achieved a native style; our household equipment, even when well designed and made, flirted with every period of every age. After the war, no matter how international the world becomes in politics or in the higher arts, in the handicrafts it will still remain nationalist. Furniture and dishes and wallpaper make a home only when they have a certain harmony of character. That is why so many American homes are disturbing and why a succession of American homes produces a kaleidoscope weariness. The character of its national setting must be felt in a home's equipment. After all, a chair has to be lived with, like a wife, more or less for life, and should therefore be more than temporarily congenial with its surroundings. Now, if we want to achieve this native style so necessary for real home-building, we shall have to make provision without too much delay for our industrial training. A generous patron to found a great industrial school would appear the one thing chiefly needful.